

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 KATHMA 01064 092334Z

67

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /057 W

----- 062984

R 091000Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4464

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KATHMANDU 1064

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, NP

SUBJ: ELECTIONS TO BEGIN MARCH 28

1. THE FIRST ELECTIONS UNDER THE PROCEDURES OUTLINED IN THE SECOND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ARE SLATED TO BEGIN MARCH 28 FOR PANCHAYAT OFFICIALS AT THE VILLAGE, TOWN AND DISTRICT LEVELS. THE FIRST ROUND OF ELECTIONS WILL COVER ONLY THREE ZONES (SETI, LUMBINI AND SAGARMATH) AND WILL PROBABLY LAST ABOUT THREE MONTHS. OFFICIALS AT THE BACK TO THE VILLAGE CAMPAIGN (BVC) ESTIMATE THAT ELECTIONS TO THE NATIONAL PANCHAYAT IN THOSE ZONES WILL TAKE PLACE IN LATE JUNE OR EARLY JULY. IN THE MEANTIME THE BVC IS CONTINUING ITS WORK IN ORGANIZING VILLAGES INTO BASIC ELECTORAL UNITS, ONLY AFTER WHICH CAN ELECTIONS FOR THE DISTRICT LEVELS TAKE PLACE.

2. FROM CONVERSATIONS WITH OFFICIALS OF THE CAMPAIGN IT IS CLEAR THAT THE BVC IS TAKING SERIOUSLY ITS CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE TO OVERSEE THE ELECTORAL PROCEDURES. ACCORDING TO ONE BOARD MEMBER "EVERY EFFORT IS BEING MADE TO PREVENT A DIVISIVE ELECTION BY STRIVING FOR CONSENSUS." IN PRACTICE THIS MEANS THAT THE CAMPAIGN IS APPROVING SLATES OF CANDIDATES TO BE ACCEPTED OR REJECTED BY THE ELECTORATE AT ALL LEVELS. CAMPAIGN OFFICIALS ADMIT THAT THE NUMBER OF CONTESTED ELECTIONS WILL BE "MINIMAL". SINCE THE CAMPAIGN, HOWEVER, IS EMPOWERED TO APPOINT PANCHAYAT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 KATHMA 01064 092334Z

CHAIRMAN IN THE EVENT NO ONE CANDIDATE WINS A TWO-THIRDS

MAJORITY THE CAMPAIGN WILL BE ASSURED CONTROL EVEN IN THOSE FEW AREAS THAT A CONTESTED ELECTION TAKES PLACE.

3. AT THE SAME TIME THAT THE NEW ELECTION PROCEDURES ARE BEING TESTED IN THREE ZONES, ELECTIONS UNDER THE OLD SYSTEM WILL BE UNDERTAKEN ON APRIL 12 TO FILL 17 SEATS IN THE NATIONAL PANCHAYAT. AMONG THOSE WHOSE SEATS EXPIRE ARE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH MRS. SUSHILA THAPA AND FORMER PRIME MINISTER KIRTI NIDHI BISTA. IN THE EVENT THAT MRS. THAPA SHOULD NOT CHOOSE TO RUN FOR ELECTION OR WERE TO BE DEFEATED SHE WOULD PROBABLY LOSE HER GOVERNMENT POST AS WELL SINCE THERE ARE NO CURRENT VACANCIES UNDER THE KING'S POWER TO DIRECTLY NOMINATE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL PANCHAYAT.

4. COMMENT: FROM ALL WE CAN GATHER THE BVC HAS BEEN EMINENTLY SUCCESSFUL IN ASSURING THAT ONLY THOSE PERSONS WHO "ACTIVELY SUPPORT THE PANCHAYAT" SYSTEM WILL STAND AS CANDIDATES. CONGRESS PARTY OFFICIALS AND, TO A LESSER EXTEN, THE LEFT WING OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY, HAVE SPENT THE WEEKS SINCE THE KING'S PROMULGATION OF THE SECOND AMENDMENT IN RURAL AREAS SEEKING TO ORGANIZE SUPPORTERS TO STAND FOR ELECTION. THE BVC HAS MADE CLEAR, HOWEVER THAT MERELY PLEDGING ALLEGIANCE TO THE PANCHAYAT IS INSUFFICIENT GROUNDS FOR OBTAINING OFFICIAL APPROVAL; ONLY "TESTED AND ACTIVE SUPPORTERS" CAN HOPE TO WIN ELECTION, ACCORDING TO A RECENT STATEMENT BY CAMPAIGN CHAIRMAN K.B. SINGH. THE BVC HAS BEEN HOLDING AN EXTENSIVE SERIES OF SEMINARS IN THE THREE ZONES TO EXPLAIN THE NEW SYSTEM BUT, MORE IMPORTANTLY, TO APPROVE ITS SLATE OF CANDIDATES. CONGRESS PARTY OFFICIALS OR SYMPATHIZERS WITH WHOM WE HAVE TALKED HAVE ALL BUT ADMITTED DEFEAT IN THE FACE OF GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION. CARGO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, LOCAL ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976KATHMA01064
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760089-0738
From: KATHMANDU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760381/aaaacteh.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 JUL 2004 by coburnhl>; APPROVED <15 OCT 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ELECTIONS TO BEGIN MARCH 28
TAGS: PINT, NP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006